

## PLANNING BOARD MEETING

Minutes, August 31, 2004  
Selectmen's Meeting Room

**Members present:** Joseph Barrell, Deborah Emello, Karl Haglund, James Heigham, Andrew McClurg

**Also present:** Tim Higgins, Senior Planner

**7:03 p.m.** There being a quorum Chairman Barrell opened the meeting.

### 1. General Business

- The minutes from July 20th were approved 3:0 as written (James Heigham abstaining as he was not present for that meeting).
- The Board briefly discussed a memo from Tommasina Olson concerning a new development on Common Street (General Residence zoning district). A building lot is being created and she is opposed to this and asks the Board to direct Office of Community Development to “deny” it. This is not possible as the new lot and the two family dwelling proposed is allowed “by right”.
- Tim Higgins provided a quick update on the Belmont Uplands 40B Eligibility Application. A site walk has not yet been scheduled by MassDevelopment. He noted that a new flood plain elevation of 10.8 feet is being considered. It is early in the review process but the figure is far above the existing flood plain elevation of 8.2 feet. Cambridge Discovery Park is employing the figure even though it is a preliminary figure. This information has been provided to MassDevelopment.

**7:15 p.m.** James Heigham read the hearing notice for the proposed re-zoning of land surrounding the Waverley Square Fire Station. Roger Colton was present along with Mike Sullivan. Mr. Colton gave a brief presentation on the re-use recommendations presented to the Board of Selectmen last evening. These were supported unanimously by the Board of Selectmen. Mr. Colton noted that the Re-Use Committee recommends that the multi-family use be allowed “by-right” rather than by Special Permit. This should create additional value to the building by eliminating the uncertainty of the Special Permit process.

Questions were asked concerning the Historic Districts Commission requirements when the building is remodeled. Mr. Colton noted that there was no final resolution but felt that there was flexibility there. There was a concern expressed with new windows and doors. A brief discussion ensued.

Discussion then turned to the options to rezone the property. Roger submitted an overlay zoning by-law proposed in the City of Watertown. He prefers to use this rather than extending the LB1 as proposed by Tim Higgins.

Henry Kazarian spoke on the proposed re-zoning by Tim Higgins and did not react negatively. He asked that residents be sent a notice for the hearing. Chairman Barrell reminded him that THIS was the public hearing.

The relationship between the Our Lady of Mercy was questioned (for possible re-zoning). The Watertown By-Law was further discussed and Tim Higgins was very uncomfortable with it as it specified distinct parcels. Roger Colton noted that his concern is just with the fire station. Karl Hugland was concerned that the re-zoning proposal including the church would raise the value of the Congregational Church and as a result, it could be demolished and replaced with a commercial building. There was a suggestion to leave the church out of any rezoning. Would it be spot zoning? There is no known answer at this time.

James Heigham suggested that a recommendation be made to extend the LBI zone to the Waverley Square Fire Station not including the church. Only parcels on the south side of Trapelo Road would be included.

Karl Haglund made a motion to recommend that Town Meeting vote to approve the rezoning (without the church parcel) provided Town Counsel approves it. (5:0 vote).

Discussion then turned to Tim Higgins memo concerning the creation of a new Section 6.3 "Multi-Family Use" which would allow multi-family construction at the Fire station and in other locations in the LBI by Design & Site Plan Review. T. Higgins noted that the density would be the same for other locations as it proposed for the fire station and that such action would fulfill one the recommendations of the Trapelo Road/Belmont Street Corridor Study. That is increasing residential density within the Town's commercial areas to promote business. The Board made changes to the draft text. A public hearing will be held on 9/28 on the proposed language for the new Section 6.3. Tim Higgins will draft revised language and forward it to the Board.

Karl Haglund discussed a Downtown Grant Program for Waverley Square Trail through DHCD, Mass Downtown Initiative. It would be a \$6,000 grant request for landscaping and street improvements and other design. A meeting of interested parties is being held on 9/8 and additional details will result. Karl Hugland will provide this to Tim Higgins and the Board. The Board voted 5:0 to ask OCD to fill out the application.

Tim Higgins asked to have the Special Permit, Design and Site Plan Review changes presented to a November Special Town Meeting. These changes were proposed in a memorandum (dated July 27, 2004) to the Board by Mr. Higgins. The Board did not feel comfortable moving forward with them at a Special Town Meeting due to time constraints.

However, it was agreed to hold a public hearing on the Demolitions Moratorium issues on 9/28.

Andy McClurg spoke about the MIT/Belmont Citizen Forum meeting to be held in the Selectmen's Meeting Room in October. He has been asked to turn over all of his personal drawings to them by Sue Bass. He is reluctant to do so as it is merely on

expression of his thoughts and are not public documents. It was agreed that Andy would not turn the plans over at this time.

**9:15 p.m.** There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned. The next scheduled meeting of the Board is on September 28, 2004.